

COMMENTS ON BEGUM JAHAN AHA'S PAPER

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0. In these rather brief comments on Begum Jahan Ara's paper (1982), I wish to point out only the following: (i) just as there are *i* elements in Bangla other than the emphasizer *i*, there are other *to* expressions too which differ substantially from the particle *to* the she concentrates on; (ii) the emphasizer *i* in Bangla bears a peculiar relation with [_v V-inf + *par*-] expressions; and (iii) the emphasizer *i* does not co-occur with co-ordinators, question-words and quite a few adverbs, while the emphasizer *o* does occur with some of them.

1. Jahan Ara 1982 has rightly noted that there are several *i*-s in Bangla. What she does not note is that there are similarly several *to*-s, too. These uses of *to* are remarkable because it is only in sentence (1) (below) that *to* occurs sentence-initially. It is clearly an adverb here because *to* in this case is substitutable with *ta-hole* 'so' - a reason adverb. Finally, although *to* in (2) can be glossed as 'so' because there exists a causal relationship between the two clauses (in this case, *ami aSi na* 'I do not come' and *Se-o aSe na* 'He too does not come'), it surely functions as a conjunction in this sort of case. Consider the following sentences:

(1) $\left. \begin{array}{l} \{ \text{to} \\ \text{ta-hole} \\ \text{so} \} \end{array} \right\} \begin{array}{l} \text{tumi jabe na?} \\ \text{you go-Fut Neg} \end{array}$

(2) *ami aSi na to Se-o aSe na*

I come-Pr Neg so he-too come-Pr Neg
'(If) I do not come, he too does not
(for this reason)'

2. The multiple use of *to* probably confirms Dasgupta's (1980) three-way classification of complementizers and conjunctions into (i) pure complementizers (e.g. *bujhi*), (ii) pure conjunctions (e.g. *Othoba*, *kiNba*, *eboN*, *karon*), and (iii) complementizers with optional use as conjunctions (e.g.. *ba*, *je*, *ki*, *kintu*, *naki*, *to*). It is worth mentioning at this point that Jahan Ara 1982 wants to separate out *i* and *to* from other elements (1982: 26 -'form classes like adverb, interjection and conjunction') whereas Dasgupta 1980 clearly points out how different *i* and *to* are in syntactic behaviour. Although one may come up with stray examples against Dasgupta's (1980: 232) optional 'EMP Preposing' rule and its guiding angel entitled 'No New Satellite Condition' (NNSC)¹ there no strong reasons to believe that his arguments for grouping *i* and *to* differently are ill-founded. Jahan Ara should, therefore, advance sufficient arguments in favour of grouping *i* and *to* together as 'modal particles'.

3.1. The emphasizer *i* in Bangla has certain peculiar lexical restrictions on it. One of them has to do with its co-occurrence with [_v Verb-infinitive + *par*-] expressions. The emphasizer can be added to the whole verb

cluster here because it is an S-daughter. But there is only one problem with it, which is that *par-* must not be

in the present indicative. Consider the following sentences:

(3) ami [v [v [v khete] [v { *pari
parlam
parbo
perechi
perechilam
partam }]] [EMP i]]

I eat-Inf be-able-Pr Ind/P Ind/Fut/Pr Pft/P Pft/P Habit

'I am/was/will be/have been/had been/ would be definitely able to eat'

3.2. Now if the emphasizer *I* is to be proposed within the same S-daughter, i.e. to the right of *khete* 'to eat', the restriction is exactly in the opposite

direction. In this case, *par* MUST BE in the present indicative. Consider the following:

(4) ami [v [v [v khete] [EMPi]] [v { pari
*parlam
*parbo
*perechi
*perechilam
*partam }]]

'I can surely eat (and it is a very good possibility)'

3.3. What is more interesting is that all the options in (4) are acceptable if the sentence is negated as in (5) which follows:

(5) ami khete-i pari na/parlam na/parbo na/pari ni/pari ni/partam na

With *thak* 'remain' and some other verbs in place of *par* such restrictions do not operate. Here is again something that students of the Bengali language can concentrate on.

4. Another important restriction on the use of *i* is that it cannot be attached to co-ordinators (such as *eboN/ar/o* 'and', *bal/OthobalkiNba* 'or', *kintu* 'but', *tobu* 'still', *bOroN* 'rather'), although one of

these *tobu* -can co-occur with another emphasizer, *o*. Also, *i* does not get encliticized with question-words or reason adverbs. With time adverbs, the following do not combine with *i*: *kOkhono kOkhono* 'sometimes', *istOk/tOk* 'until', and *ebe²* 'now'. Notice that the restriction here does not merely depend on the semantic class of these time adverbs, for *kOkhono* 'at times', *porjontolobdi* 'until', and *Ekhon* 'now' can accept *i*. Moreover, the emphasizer *o* can get attached to *kOkhono kOkhono*. At this moment, I do not know what are the factors responsible for such lexical restrictions on the use of *i*, but I am sure it will be rewarding to look into the matter in greater detail.⁸

Notes

1. Dasgupta (1980: 215), by proposing NNSC, blocks optional movements of elements (e.g. complementizers such as *bujhi* or emphaizers such as *i*) across the head of a construction because he shows that such movements result in ungrammatical constructions. If we take up the following sentences (which include his examples a and b), NNSC seems to gain support. In a-d, b is allowed because in this case the landing site of *i* is inside the head and d is disallowed because *i* is moving across the head to a satellite position:

a. o tomake uttorTa
 [V [V [V bole] [V debe]] [EMP i]]

(s)he you-Obj answer-item tell-and
 will-give-EMP
 '(S)he will definitely tell you the
 answer'

- b. o tomake uttorTa bole-i debe
- c. bole o tomake uttorTa debe-i
- d. *bole-i o tomake uttorTa debe

It is strange, however, that if a
 above had *to*

REFERENCES

Dasgupta, Probal. 1980. Questions and relative complement clauses in a Bangla grammar. New York University Ph.D. dissertation.

in bole--___ i.e. : as in e, one CAN MOVE the emphaizer *i* violating NNSC. Consider the following sentences:

- e. o tomake uttorTa bole-to debe-i
- f. o tomake uttorTa bole-i-to debe
- g. bole-to 0 tomake uttorTa debe-i
- h. bole-i-to tomake uttorTa debe

2. *ebe* 'now' is an archaic poetic expression.
 3. Another area of investigation that has been completely left out is the coupled use of *i* and *to* (which Jahan Ara 1982 has briefly touched on) and the restrictions that may be put on it. For instance, if a sentence-final *na* 'Neg' in *i* has to receive the enclitic *-i*, the latter must be followed by *to*, as i-k show:

- i. tumi jabe na
 you go-Fut *Neg*
 'You will not go'
- j. *tumi jabe na-i
- k. tumi jabe na-i-to
 'You won't go (it is definite; who said you would?)'

Jahan Ara, Begum. 1982. The particles *i* and *to* in Bangla. IL 42. 26-30.